

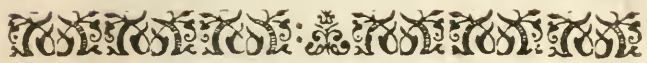
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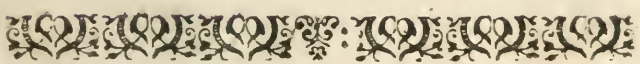
KINGSTON ONTARIO CANADA



A
LETTER.

To the Reverend

Dr. SHERLOCK.



THE

LETTER

TO THE

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THE

A N
A N S W E R
T O A
L E T T E R

Sent to the REVEREND
Dr. SHERLOCK, &c.

Relating to his
S E R M O N
Preach'd before the LORD-MAYOR.

NOVEMBER the 5th 1712.

To which are added,
Some Observations upon the Account the
Lord Bishop of BANGOR has given of
his intended Answer to the Representation.

By THOMAS SHERLOCK, D.D.
Dean of *Chichester*, Master of the *Temple*,
and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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A N
A N S W E R

T O A
L E T T E R sent the Reverend
Dr. *SHERLOCK*, &c.



THE Necessity I am under of doing Justice to my self against no less an Imputation than having concurr'd in condemning a Doctrine, which I have publickly taught, must be my Excuse for troubling the World with an Affair, which is so wholly concerned with Persons, and so little with Things, as not to be worth their Attention.

The Design of the Letter-writer, is express'd by himself; and I shall give it in his own Words: *I do not design to examine the Grounds of what his Lordship has said in his Sermon, nor the Grounds of what you have said in your Sermon preached before the Lord-Mayor, November the 5th 1712. I shall only point out some Passages in your Sermon, which are conceived to carry as Evil a Tendency, as those Positions of his Lordship mentioned in the Report of the Committee, of which you was a Member, and to which Representation you concurred.*

The Charge you see is merely personal. The Enquiry is not whether the Bishop and I are both in the right, or both in the wrong: But whether I have not taught the same Doctrine, which I disapproved when taught by his Lordship.

The Letter-writer may think it an Honour to me to have the World told, that I agree with the Bishop of *Bangor*; but the Compliment comes attended with such Circumstances at present, that I cannot accept it. And I hope his Lordship will pardon the Necessity I am under, of shewing, that his Doctrines and mine are not the same.

My Intention is, not to transgress the Bounds prescribed by the Letter-writer, nor to examine the Tendency of his Lordship's Doctrine, or my own. The Appeal is made
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to the World, and there let it rest, until the Examination shall be resumed in proper Time and Place. The Civilities bestowed on me in the Letter are so great, that I must be forc'd to dismiss them once for all, with the Answer usually made on such Occasions, *'Tis much more than I deserve.*

The Point of Agreement between his Lordship and me, as stated in the Letter, solely regards the Authority of the Civil Magistrate in Matters of Religion. To enable the Reader then to judge between us, it will be proper to shew him how this Cause comes to be attended with any Difficulties. It will be allowed, I suppose, that as the Magistrate derives his Power from God ; and rules over reasonable Creatures ; it is his proper Business to see that Obedience be paid to the Dictates of the Law of Reason, with respect to God, as well as Men ; and that Offences against them be punished. In this Case Civil Sanctions do not Create the Original Obligation to the Law, but are added in Aid of the Original Obligation, the more effectually to secure the Subjects Obedience : For the Law has its primary Force from Reason and the Light of Nature ; and the Civil Sanction is design'd, not to persuade Men of the Principles whereof they are already persuaded ; but to deter them from acting against the Law which they are under, in virtue of the Reason

6 *An Answer to a Letter sent*

Reason and Understanding given them by God.

There wants no Human Law to make Murder, Rapine, or injuring one another, to be Crimes : They wou'd be Crimes were there no Civil Law in the World : All then that the Human Law in those Cases can do, is to declare the Original Law for the better Instruction of the People ; and to ascertain the Punishment of Transgression, in order to guard the Virtue.

I wou'd observe to the Reader, that these Moral Laws, are a Part of Religion ; they are the main constituent Parts of Christian Religion, as his Lordship informs us, (page 17. *Sermon*) The Laws of Christ ——— are almost all general Appeals to the Will of ——— God, to his Nature known by the common Reason of Mankind, and to the Imitation of that Nature, which must be our Perfection. From whence 'tis plain, that whoever excludes the Magistrate from adding Sanctions to the Laws of Christ, must exclude him from adding Sanctions to the Laws of Reason and Nature.

But to proceed :

Were Religion in general, as it relates to the Worship and Service of God, and to the Principles and Methods by which Men hope
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to obtain his Favour, one, plain, uniform Thing, which there was no more Reason to dispute about, than there is about the Law of Reason and Nature in Moral Points; 'tis plain, there would be nothing with respect to Religion left to the Magistrate, but to use his Power to enforce Obedience in Matters of Religion, as well as of Morality; and his Right to do so would be undeniable.

This could hurt no Man's Conscience, because Conscience cannot be pleaded for the Breach of Duties plain and indisputable; and 'tis evidently the Magistrate's Duty, as he is the Vicegerent of God, to maintain the Honour of God and Religion.

As to the Christian Institution particularly, were the Church every where what it ought to be, one, and the same, teaching the same Doctrines which Christ and his Apostles published, and no other; so that Christians had no Reason to dispute which were true Doctrines, and which not; it would be very proper for the Magistrate, nay, it would be his Duty to add the Sanctions of this World, to keep the People stedfast to the Duty which they acknowledged to be incumbent on them, in virtue of the Principles and Doctrines universally receiv'd. For since the Laws of Christ are, as his Lordship informs us, *Declarations of Conditions to be performed in THIS WORLD*; (p. 17. *Sermon*), and do most of them, as
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I'll venture to add, affect the Happiness, as well of publick Societies, as of private Men ; how could the Magistrate of *this World* better employ that Portion of Power intrusted to him, than by applying it to those very Points, to which God has applied the Sanctions of the other World ? Can he have a better Example to follow, than that of God himself, in using the Power intrusted to him by God ? Or, are those Points not fit to be promoted by Rewards and Punishments, to which God himself has annex'd Rewards and Punishments ? For it ought to be remembred, that all Rewards and Punishments, whether of this World, or of the next, operate on the Mind in the same Way : One may be stronger than the other, and influence more, as it may happen ; but still they are Rewards and Punishments, and operate as such.

But the Case in Fact is, That the Magistrate may possibly misapply his Rewards and Punishments, when he interposes in Matters of a Religious Nature ; since many Points of mere Speculation, or such at least as have no direct Influence on practical Duties, have by degrees been brought into Religion ; and Churches have divided on those Points. Thus between us and the Church of *Rome*, there are many Controversies of this Sort ; about the Number and Nature of Sacraments ; about the Power of the Pope ; about Auricular

In Confession, Penance, and the like. In these Points the Power of the Sword is applied in Popish Countries, to make Men believe, as the Church believes, whether they can or no; *i. e.* not to secure Obedience to a plain Law, but to force a Belief of a doubtful, or perhaps a false Opinion. And this it will appear was the only Point before me in the Sermon referr'd to by the Letter-Writer; as will be easily admitted by those who will call to mind the Occasion of it. The 5th of *November* was the Day on which it was preached; and the Methods used by the Church of *Rome* to propagate her Opinions were, as they ought to be, in the Preacher's View.

Now with regard to the Question before us, here lies, as far as I can judge, the true Point: So to preserve the Authority of the Magistrate in Matters of Religion, as not to set up him *to be a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart*, or to give him a Right to force upon Men, Opinions and Doctrines which their Reason and Understanding cannot admit; so to exclude him from meddling in these Points, as not to destroy his Authority to support true Religion, and the Honour of God in the World.

There may be Difficulties in adjusting the exact Bounds of the Magistrate's Power in these Cases; but I am no more concerned

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with

with them at present than the Letter-Writer is. I have stated this Point, only to enable the Reader to judge, whether the Doctrines I have publish'd on this Article, are consistent with themselves, or agreeable to the Bishop's.

I have been no great Writer, and yet in the few Things which I have been called upon to publish, I have fully declared my self on this Argument; and I will shew the Reader,

1. That in a Sermon published before that of the 5th of *November*, and in one publish'd after it, I have asserted and maintained the Magistrate's Authority to preserve true Religion, and the Honour of God in the World.

2. That in the 5th of *November* Sermon, I did, as the Occasion led me, consider how far the Magistrate's Power extended, in Points of Opinion and Speculation, with respect to the Consciences of Men. And that I have so asserted his Authority, as not to subject him, and his Government, to all the extravagant Efforts of what Men call Conscience; so confined it, as not to give him a Right to hurt Men for mere Opinions and Speculations in Matters of Religion.

But that we may not lose sight of the main Point, the Agreement with the Bishop, I shall shew

shew his Lordship's Opinion from the Sense which his Words seem to me to carry; not intending hereby to preclude his Lordship from any other Sense or Meaning, which he shall think fit to insist on. And as to the particular Passages of my Sermon, confronted with Passages from his Lordship's by the Letter-Writer, they shall be considered in the Close of this Paper.

The first Passage I shall produce out of his Lordship's Sermon, will be found p. 13, & 14, 8vo. Edit.

It is the same thing, as to Rewards and Punishments, to carry forward the great End of his Kingdom. If any Men upon Earth have a Right to add to the Sanctions of his Laws; that is, to increase the Number, or alter the Nature of the Rewards and Punishments of his Subjects, in Matters of Conscience or Salvation: They are so far Kings in his Stead, and reign in their own Kingdom, and not in his.

This Passage has been controverted between the Bishop, and Dr. Snape; and it is but fair to consider his Lordship's Explication.

The Dr. tells the Bishop, that this Passage amounts to saying, *That if any King, Parliament, &c. shall encourage Religion by any Temporal Rewards, &c. they usurp the Dominion of Christ, and dethrone him from his Spiritual Kingdom.* Doctor's Letter, p. 29.

The Bishop, in Answer, says—*That — whoever alter the Nature of these [i. e. Christ's Rewards and Punishments] or add to them, do truly themselves affix Rewards and Punishments : Therefore they are so far Kings themselves. That according to me, they dethrone Christ from his Spiritual Kingdom, is your own hard and unjust Comment. But that as far as they alter his Sanctions, or add New ones ; that, I say, so far They reign in their own Kingdom, is, in my Opinion, as clear a Proposition as this ; That, as far as New Sanctions are brought into Christ's Religion, so far New Sanctions are brought in.*

According then to this Explication, one End of his Lordship's rejecting the Word Church, because of the *inconsistent Notions* belonging to it, and making choice of the clearer Image of the *Kingdom*, was for the sake of advancing this very *consistent Notion*, *That as far as new Sanctions are brought into Christ's Religion, so far new Sanctions are brought in.* I believe the World will not part with their old Notions for such Improvements as these ; nor wou'd his Lordship have given such a Sense of his Words, had he not been so surrounded with Difficulties, as to be able to give no other. A Cause seems to me to be gasping for Life, when 'tis brought so low as to hang upon Identical Propositions ; they are generally the last Pangs, and portend a sudden Dissolution.

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But his Lordship has not taken his own Words fairly in this Explication; for he does not say barely, *They are so far Kings and reign in their own Kingdom*: But his Words are, *They are so far Kings in his Stead, &c.* To be King in another's Stead, is to exercise his Authority, either with or without his Commission; and therefore his Lordship must prove, that he meant here to assert, that Kings have Christ's Commission, and are his Vicegerents, *to add Sanctions to his Laws*; and that he meant, in his Sermon, to commend them for so doing; as they deserve to be commended, when they act in pursuance of a Commission receiv'd from Christ: Or he must be content to be told, that he charges them with acting; when they add Sanctions to the Laws of Christ, in the Kingdom of Christ; against his Consent; and that is, I think, as the Dr. says, *to usurp the Dominion of Christ*. But further; let the Connection of this Passage, as it stands in his Lordship's Sermon, be considered. He affirms, p. 12. *If any Absolute Vicegerent Authority—were lodged in any Men upon Earth, the Consequence wou'd be, That what still retains the Name of the Church of Christ, wou'd not be the Kingdom of Christ, but the Kingdom of those Men vested with such Authority.* His Lordship pursues the Argument in this and the following Page, and concludes it in these Words: *If*
such

such an Absolute Authority be once lodged with Men, under the Notion of Interpreters, they then become the Legislators, and not Christ; and they rule in their own Kingdom, and not in his. You see by Comparifon of these Passages, that to rule in their own Kingdom, is, in his Lordship's Sense, to throw Christ out of his; for what retains the Name of the Church, wou'd not, he says, in this Case, be the Kingdom of Christ, but the Kingdom of these Men, &c.

Immediately after this Argument, follows the Passage quoted; *It is the same Thing as to Rewards and Punishments, &c.* What is the same Thing? Why his Lordship tells you; That to add to the Sanctions of Christ, is the same Thing as to pretend to an absolute Authority of interpreting his Laws: And such absolute Authority, he had said before, made the Church cease to be the Kingdom of Christ, and to become the Kingdom of those Men, &c. And consequently, when he affirms in the Passage now before us, That whoever adds Sanctions to Christ's Laws, *are Kings in his Stead, and reign in their own Kingdom, and not in his;* His Meaning must be that they divest Christ of his Kingdom.

I was surpriz'd to find his Lordship accusing the Doctor of making an hard and unjust Comment on his Words, when he himself makes the same Comment on them in the very
next

next Passage, which is joined to that quoted, by this Connexion ; *so it is — whenever —*. How is it ? Why look to the End of the Passage, his Lordship will tell you, P. 14. *This is so far taking Christ's Kingdom out of his Hands, and placing it in their own.* That is, if I can understand, 'Tis *dethroning Christ from his Spiritual Kingdom.* His Lordship explains himself to the same Purpose in his first Observation from the Doctrine of his Sermon, P. 24. *Substituting others in his Place, as Lawgivers and Judges, in the same Points, in which he must either ALONE, or NOT AT ALL, be Lawgiver and Judge.* And P. 20. where his Lordship treats of this very Point of adding such Sanctions ; his Words are, *There is so far a Change from a Kingdom which is not of this World to a Kingdom which is of this World ;* which is something more than only saying, where Sanctions are added, there Sanctions are added ; for a Change from the Kingdom of Christ to a Kingdom of this World, is a manifest Invasion of the Kingdom of Christ, by a Kingdom of this World. I think 'tis evident then what his Lordship must mean by *reigning in their own Kingdom* : And if there be Occasion, there are still more Passages in the Sermon to confirm this Sense of the Expression.

The Letter-Writer's Exposition of *this* Passage is very extraordinary, Pag. 13. His Lordship

Lordship says, *If any Men upon Earth have a Right, &c. Thereby excluding Laity or Clergy, Church or State, from altering the Nature of Rewards and Punishments in Matters of Conscience and Salvation.* What does the good Man mean by excluding them from *altering*, what 'tis impossible they ever shou'd *alter*. The Rewards and Punishments, his Lordship tells us, are the future Rewards and Punishments of another World; how then shou'd any Mortal *alter them*; add what you will, yet still *they* will remain unalterable. And therefore I cou'd never understand what his Lordship meant, by *altering the Nature of Christ's Rewards and Punishments*; much less can I understand the Letter-Writer, who makes this *altering* to be the *whole* of what his Lordship affirms. And now I will venture to say, that his Lordship's Words in this Passage carry the following Sense; *That if any Men upon Earth, (i. e. as the Letter-Writer explains him, either Church or State) have, or claim a Right, to add to the Sanctions of Christ's Laws, they so far become Kings in his Stead, and divest him of his Power.*

And here I must once more remind the Reader, What the Laws of Christ are in his Lordship's Opinion; *They are almost all general Appeals to the Will of God, to his Nature known by the common Reason of Mankind;*
and

and to the Imitation of that Nature —. That is, they are almost all, Laws and Dictates of Reason and Nature. To which his Lordship adds, *The being Subjects to Christ is to this very End, that we may the better and more effectually perform the Will of God.*

His Lordship's Doctrine then being laid together, amounts to this :

'Tis an Invasion of the Kingdom of Christ, to add Sanctions to the Laws of Christ.

But the Laws of Christ are almost all Laws of Reason and Nature, and are intended to make us perform the Will of God.

Therefore, for Princes to add Sanctions to make Men Obey the Laws of Reason and Nature, or perform the Will of God, is an Invasion of the Kingdom of Christ.

I have put this into Form, that his Lordship's Doctrine may more evidently appear: And in Imitation of his Lordship, who seems, in his late Performances, to be grown very fond of Mood and Figure. The Letter-Writer has another Exposition in Favour of his Lordship, page 18. which he meant, I suppose, to extend to all that his Lordship has said on this Head. His Words are ; *His Lordship asserts, That to apply Force or Flattery, worldly Pleasure or Pain, in order to make Men profess this or that Opinion, (for this is evidently his Meaning) is to act, &c.* This Passage was, I confess, to me a strong

Presumption, that the Letter had not gone thro' his Lordship's Hand ; he must be too much aware of what he has delivered in his Sermon, to use so poor an Evasion. The Letter-Writer has offered it to his Consideration, and when it lies before him, he'll find that SOMETHING he must part with, and I heartily wish him the happier Choice.

In the mean time I will shew the Letter-Writer, that his Evasion is not applicable to the Passage before us. His Lordship's Words are, *If any Men upon Earth have a Right—to add to the Sanctions of his Laws, to increase the Number—of the Rewards and Punishments of his (i. e. Christ's) Subjects, &c.* His Lordship, you see, speaks of increasing the Rewards and Punishments of the Subjects of Christ, and with regard to the Laws of Christ ; *i. e.* with regard to the Laws they already profess. In this Case therefore the Profession is supposed, for they are Subjects ; and doubtful Opinions are out of his Lordship's Case, for he speaks only of *adding Sanctions to the Laws of Christ.* And that Justice may be done his Lordship, I desire his own Account of the Subjects of Christ may be considered, *p. 25. The Church of Christ is the Number of Persons, who are sincerely and willingly Subjects to him, as Lawgiver and Judge, &c.* To be sincerely and willingly Subjects to him as Lawgiver, is to be sincere-

sincerely and willingly subject to his Laws : And therefore, when his Lordship speaks of adding Sanctions to the Laws of Christ, and with respect to the Subjects of Christ; the willing Choice is supposed over ; otherwise they cou'd not be Subjects. And therefore his Lordship cou'd not in this Case speak of the Sanctions of the Civil Power, as they may be made Instruments of forcing a Persuasion, but merely as they are Motives of Obedience to the Laws already professed and admitted. He does not speak of Civil Sanctions, as they may be applied to *make* Men Subjects to Christ ; but only as they are an Increase of the Rewards and Punishments of those, who *are already* Subjects to Christ ; that is, as they are calculated not to force a doubtful Opinion, or a Religion not yet profess'd, but as they are intended to secure Obedience to a plain Law already received.

The next Passage quoted in the Representation, and by the Letter-Writer, is p. 18. of the Sermon : *The Sanctions of Christ's Laws are Rewards, &c.——nay, not the much lesser Negative Discouragements that belong to Human Society. He was far from thinking that these cou'd be the Instruments of such a Persuasion, as he thought acceptable to God.*

He was far from thinking—and as he thought acceptable to God, are fine Expressions when applied to our Saviour, and set his Authority very high :

They may serve his Lordship or me ; but when applied to a Divine Infallible Teacher, they are neither proper nor decent. However, here his Lordship has got hold of the Word *Persuasion* : I wish him Joy of it ; and let him make the most of his *Word* : It can only, in my poor Opinion, serve to shew, that he mistakes the Nature and Tendency of Negative Discouragements ; which are not meant as Instruments of Persuasion to those who dissent from the Church ; but merely as a Security to the Church from those who wou'd destroy it. Is there no Difference between forcing a Man to join with you, and hindring him from hurting you ? Is it Persecution, not to trust a Man with Power to injure yourself ? This is the only Use of Negative Discouragements ; and 'tis a very right Use. Negative Discouragements are no more Instruments of Persuasion, than Locks and Bolts are Instruments of making Men honest ; because they serve to shut the Door against such as wou'd force in to spoil you of your Goods. All I shall observe from this Passage, is, That his Lordship does not allow the Magistrate to give any Encouragement to true Religion, or even any Negative Discouragement to the contrary.

The next, and only Passage more, that I shall produce on this Occasion, is at p. 20. of the Sermon.

As soon as ever you hear of any of the Engines of this World, whether of the greater or the lesser Sort, you must immediately think that then, and so far, the Kingdom of this World takes place. For, I. If the very Essence of God's Worship be Spirit and Truth; II. If Religion be Virtue and Charity, under the Belief of a Supreme Governor and Judge; III. If true real Faith cannot be the Effect of Force; IV. And if there can be no Reward, where there is no willing Choice: Then IN ALL, or ANY of THESE CASES, to apply Force or Flattery, worldly Pleasure or Pain, is to act contrary to the Interest of True Religion, as it is plainly opposite to the Maxims upon which Christ founded his Kingdom; who chose the Motives which are not of this World, to support a Kingdom which is not of this World.

Here, I think, there is no Difficulty in his Lordship's Expressions: He roundly affirms, that to apply Rewards and Punishments, in ALL or ANY of the Cases mentioned, is to act contrary to the Interest of True Religion, as it is plainly opposite to the Maxims on which Christ founded his Kingdom. Yet even here the Letter-Writer would persuade us, that all his Lordship has said, amounts only to this; To make use of Temporal Rewards of Religion, is Adding, so far, Something of this World, to a Kingdom not of
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this World. [Letter, p. 17.] Which is indeed a very safe Proposition : It has this only Fault, that 'tis nothing to the Purpose.

His Lordship says, That to add Rewards and Punishments in any of his Cases, *is to act contrary to the Interest of True Religion, and in Opposition to the Maxims on which Christ founded his Kingdom*. And this surely is a little more than barely saying ; *So far, Something of this World* is added : For 'tis saying, that this *Something* is added, contrary to the *Interest of True Religion*, and in Opposition to the *Maxims of Christ*. His Lordship will not, I presume, maintain, That any thing ought, or may lawfully be done, that is *contrary to the Interest of True Religion*, and the *Maxims of Christ* ; and therefore he does, and must maintain, that in all the Cases mention'd, 'tis unlawful, 'tis wicked, to apply Temporal Rewards and Punishments.

And now pray consider the Cases. The Committee fix'd on the two first only ; because his Lordship might possibly say, that the two last refer to Matters of mere Opinion and Persuasion ; but of the two first he cannot say so.

The first Case supposes the *Worship of God to be Spirit and Truth* : The Second supposes *Religion to be Virtue and Charity*, under the
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Belief of a Supreme Governor and Judge.
 Are these Matters of Opinion, or Speculation only? Are they not the Dictates of Reason and Nature, as well as Laws of the Gospel? Are they not Essential Religion, such as Men are bound to, even as they are reasonable Creatures, antecedently to any Revelation whatever? Are they not Laws which all the World are under, in virtue of the Understanding given them by God? And must the Magistrate be excluded, merely because these Laws are adopted into the Gospel, and are become the Laws of Christ? The Magistrate rules over Reasonable Creatures, and is justifiable in treating them upon a Supposition that they are persuaded of what Reason teaches: And therefore, in these Cases, he has a Right to suppose his Subjects persuaded that the *Worship of God is Spirit and Truth*; and that *Religion is Virtue and Charity*, under the *Belief of a Supreme Governor and Judge*: And consequently, in these Cases, his Rewards and Punishments have no View towards creating a Persuasion, but merely towards making Men do, what they know they ought to do.

This must be so, unless any one will say, That the Magistrate ought to govern his People, as supposing them to be Brutes, and not Men. Besides, does not the Practice of *Virtue and Charity* take in every thing, that

that affects the Happiness and Well-Being of Mankind in this World? And is this no Concern of the Magistrates? Because Virtue and Charity, and the contrary Vices, shall be rewarded, and punished hereafter, Must the World be torn in Pieces in the mean while without Remedy? And will it be sufficient for the Magistrate to say, when he is called upon, to punish the Offences against Vertue and Charity: This is Religion; these are Laws of Christ: he has annex'd Rewards and Punishments to them hereafter, and I will have nothing to do with them?

I did not intend to enter so far into the Consequences of his Lordship's Doctrine; but I have done it for the Consolation of the Letter-Writer, who seems wonderfully scared with a Consequence drawn by the Committee from this Passage; His Words are, P. 17. *The Report has charged his Lordship's Position, just now cited, with setting the Worship of God, and the Neglect of it, Religion and Irreligion, on an equal Foot in this World. One of the most strange and surprizing Consequences that ever was drawn!* Dear Sir, don't be frighten'd; the Matter shall be made easy to you; the Consequence shall be brought home to your Door, without any Trouble to your self. You see his Lordship affirms, that, *If the very Effence of God's Worship be Spirit and Truth; if Religion be*

Virtue and Charity, &c. In these Cases, to apply Force or Flattery, worldly Pleasure or Pain (i. e. in other Words, Rewards or Punishments) is to act contrary to the Interests of true Religion, as it is plainly opposite to the Maxims on which Christ founded his Kingdom. From whence I infer, that his Lordship is against applying Rewards and Punishments in these Cases, because I cannot suppose his Lordship is for doing what is contrary to the *Interest of true Religion*, and *opposite to the Maxims of Christ*. And now, pray Sir, do the two Cases stated by his Lordship, concern the *Worship of God, and Religion*, or no? If you shou'd say they don't, I am sure I shou'd be surprized: If you allow they do, the Consequence is very plain, That since the Rewards and Punishments of this World are not to be applied to the *Worship of God, and Religion; the Worship of God, and the Neglect of it, Religion and Irreligion, are set upon an equal Foot in this World.* For what is there to make a Difference? *Force and Flattery, Pleasure and Pain, Frowns and Discouragements*, nay, even *Negative Discouragements*, are taken away. Where then is the Difference with respect to this World?

The Reader now sees what his Lordship's Doctrine is.

He affirms it to be an Invasion of Christ's Kingdom, for any Power on Earth to add

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Temporal Rewards and Punishments to Christ's Laws :

That 'tis contrary to the Maxims of Christ, to encourage the true Worship of God, and true Religion ; or to discourage the contrary, by the Sanctions of this World :

And consequently, that 'tis impious and wicked for any Prince to interpose his Authority to support true Religion, and the Honour of God in the World.

It is now time to shew the Reader, what I have publickly declared upon the same Subject ; that he may be enabled to decide the weighty Controversy of the *Agreement* between the Bishop and me, charged in the Letter.

*In a Sermon Preach'd and Publish'd long before that referr'd to by the Letter-Writer, I thus express my self : *The Fear of God, and of the King, are joined together in Scripture, to shew the Dependence one has upon the other. The only lasting Foundation of Civil Obedience, is the Fear of God ; and the truest Interest of Princes, is to maintain the HONOUR OF RELIGION, by which they secure their own.* Serimon before the Queen, Jan. 31.

1703. p. 1.

God requires an External and Visible Worship from us, in which outward Order and Decency are required, but not determin'd ; and therefore must be left to their Jurisdiction, to whom we are answerable for our Outward Behaviour
in

to the Reverend Dr. Sherlock. 27

in all Things. How far mistaken then is the Zeal of those, who decline submitting to the Orders of the Church, because they are of Human Appointment: Whereas being Ordained by a lawful Power, they have so far the Stamp of Divine Authority, as to make Disobedience to them a Sin against God. Ibid. p. 8.

The Authority of the Prince is as much concerned in maintaining the Honour and Order of God's Service, as of his own; and the Noblest Character that belongs to Princes, is that of Nursing Fathers and Mothers to the Church of Christ: The Peace and Order of which, is at once the Splendor and Security of a Government. Ibid. p. 13.

It is unaccountable in Reason, that in Matters of Religious Government, every Man thinks himself Judge of what is Decent and Convenient; and what fit to be obey'd: Whereas in Matters of Civil Government, whatever they act, they dare not pretend to the same Discretionary Power. As if the Case were not the same in both; and Obedience in all Things Lawful and Honest, (further than which no Man's private Judgment extends) in both of like Necessity. Ibid. p. 16.

In the Year 1711. I publish'd a Sermon preach'd before the House of Commons: The Passages of it, pertinent to the Subject in Hand, are these.

The Royal Authority being the Immediate Power of God, has no more Immediate Con-

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cern, than to promote the Service, and establish the Honour of God in the Hearts of Men : 'Tis but a Natural Tribute for Princes to pay their Maker, to provide, that those whom God has made to be their Subjects, should not **CEASE** to be his Servants. Sermon, before the Commons, p. 10.

To prevent Cavils, I desire it may be observed, that what I call *Establishing the Honour of God in the Hearts of Men*, in the former Part of this Passage ; I explain in the latter, by providing that they should not **CEASE** to be his Servants. So that *Establishing*, plainly means here, *Maintaining and Preserving*.

Again : These Advantages can never be wanting under the Conduct of a Prince, who governs in the Fear of the Lord. The Sense of his own Duty, and his Regard for the Honour of God, will incline him in all Cases to promote and encourage the Service of his Master ; (and to fill up that Character, which (when justly sustained) is both the Ornament and Strength of the Crown, **DEFENDER OF THE FAITH**. Ibid. p. 11.

These Passages shall suffice for the present ; and when the Letter-Writer has reconcil'd these to the Bishop's Doctrine, I'll look more for him.

But my Friend perhaps will say ; If you advanc'd Doctrines contrary to those of your Fifth of November Sermon, before you preach'd

preach'd it, and contradicted it afterwards ; what's that to me ? I charge the Doctrines in that Sermon with being the same with his Lordship's : Do you clear them. Rightly admonish'd ; and I obey.

The Reader will remember, that in Stating this Case at first, I observ'd to him, that many Points of mere Speculation, or such at least as have no direct Influence on Practical Duties, have been by degrees brought into Religion ; and Churches have divided on those Points. These Opinions not being general, in virtue of any known Principle of Reason, or uncontested Revelation, Men will always differ about them. And here arises the Difficulty about the Magistrate's Power : Shall he interpose with his Authority, and espouse one Side in such doubtful Cases, and force all into his Opinion ? Or shall he be excluded, and let Mens Consciences work as they please, without Controul ? My way of thinking in this Matter, I confess, is, That Conscience, in these Cases, ought not to be forc'd, but that Men shou'd be at liberty to follow the best Light they can get, in chusing their Opinions. But then to secure the Magistrate from being insulted by Men who pretend to act according to their Conscience ; their Actions, I think, without any Regard had to the Principle from whence they arise, ought to be, and are subject to the Jurisdiction of the Magistrate. And 'tis in this Sense, that

I have

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I have said in the Sermon more than once, That the *Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience* ; that is, he has nothing to do to examine Mens Conscience, to find the Errors of it; and when Conscience is pleaded in Justification of evil Actions, he has nothing to do with it neither; the Plea does not lie before him, to be considered as an Excuse of the Action. And this I have so fully explained, Page 12, 13. of the Sermon, that the Letter-Writer cou'd not have mistaken, had he not chus'd to do so.

That this was the true Point before me, in the 5th of *November* Sermon, I will now shew. I have already mentioned the Occasion of the Day, and the Practice of the Church of *Rome*, then naturally under Consideration: and this alone will make a great Difference between his Lordship and me, were the Case even as 'tis represented by the Letter-Writer: He had no such Occasion, no such View to plead; He chose his Subject; and without Regard to, or the least Mention of the Church of *Rome*, or her Practices, he writes down the Magistrate's Power in all Cases. If our Words were the same, yet our Meaning was not. I expressly spoke of the Exercise of the Temporal Power, as used in the Church of *Rome*; and his Lordship as expressly of the Exercise of it, in all possible Cases of Religion whatever. I spoke of forcing the Conscience; his Lordship of enforcing the Laws

of Christ, in Matters of Natural Morality, where Conscience cannot be pleaded : I was against driving Men into doubtful or false Opinions, in opposition to the Light of their own Minds : His Lordship was against encouraging Obedience by Temporal Sanctions, to those Laws, which the Light of the Mind cannot reject.

But I quit this Plea ; I have no Occasion for it.

It will be allowed me, I suppose, that in chusing the Heads of Discourse, I had regard to the Subject I intended to consider : Now with respect to our Saviour's Reason, for the Exclusion of Temporal Power in Matters of Religion : I say — p. 5.

1. *I shall shew : that it holds in all Cases, with respect to Church Power ;* that is, that the Church, as such, has no Temporal Power. Under this Head the Letter-Writer found some strong Expressions against Temporal Power in Matters of Religion : And what I said, with respect to the Churches Right of using such Power, he has confronted against the Bishop's Declarations, with regard to the Magistrate's Right ; and the unwary Reader is led to think we mean the same Thing, when we are speaking on two very different Subjects. But this will appear by and by. The Second is

2. *That the Argument does not affect the Civil Magistrate's Power, nor tye up his Hands from*

from interposing with the Civil Sword in Matters proper for his Jurisdiction ; however they may be pretended to be allied to Religion.

Can the Reader think, that if I had intended to speak of the Laws of Christ, of pure essential Worship, and Moral Religion, that I should have used such an Expression, (*however they may be pretended to be allied to Religion*) of any Actions flowing from them ? No, 'tis plain then, that I meant to speak of such Points of Conscience only, as often do produce very evil Effects in the World ; and of these Effects I properly said, *they are pretended to be allied to Religion ; i. e. because they arise from Conscience and Opinion.*

It will appear to any body who will be at the trouble to read the Sermon, that I all along consider these Points of Conscience under these two Views : 1. As residing in the Mind (in which Case I call them, *Matters purely of a Religious Nature*, p. 12.) where the Magistrate ought not to touch them : 2. As breaking out into ill Practices, which the Magistrate may lawfully punish. Upon this Distinction, the whole Sermon is founded. But had I considered these Points as pure Religion, cou'd I have put the Case of their growing out into Actions worthy of Punishment ? 'Tis plain, I cou'd not from the Reason of the Thing ; and 'tis plain I did not, from these express Words in

the Sermon, p. 15. *The Civil Magistrate is of this World, and the Affairs of it are his proper Care; from which he ought not to be excluded by any Pretences of Religion: Nor will this bring any Men under Difficulty upon the Account of PURE RELIGION, which never interferences with the Magistrates Rights.* The Reader will observe the Distinction between *Pretences of Religion*, and *Pure Religion*; and that the former Expression describes the Subject I was treating on; the latter, that Religion, which I here declare was not within the Argument, and cou'd not therefore be affected by it. I beg leave to transcribe one Passage from Page 11 of the Sermon, which will clear this Point, and shew on what Subject I was treating; whether the Laws of Christ and pure Religion, or doubtful Opinions and Speculations in Matters of Faith.

The Words are; *As to mere difference in Opinion, which ends only in Speculation, or influences only the Internal Acts of the Mind, or produces only such external Acts, as no way concern the publick Peace; I see not how the Magistrate can interest himself in them: But where-ever Difference of Opinion is attended with Consequences that may affect the State, How can it stand with Reason, or Publick Good, to exclude the Magistrates in such Cases?*

Am I here speaking of the *Laws of Christ*; of the *very Essence of God's Worship, Spirit and Truth*; or of *Religion*, considered, as *Virtue and Charity*, under the Belief of a *Supreme Governor*

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and Judge? If I am not, how can the Bishop and I be made to agree in One Point, when 'tis evident, we are treating of Two entirely distinct and opposite? His Lordship expressly throws out of his Subject, all *Declarations* and *Decisions* of Men, P. 14. And speaks of *the Laws of the Kingdom as Christ left them*, P. 18. I speak of *Men's Opinions; Mistakes in their Judgment*, P. 12. and *Errors of their Conscience*, P. 13.

And are we not now in an hopeful way of Agreement? His Lordship argues, *That if the Church of Christ be the Kingdom of Christ, it is essential to it, that Christ himself be the sole Law-giver, and sole Judge, that all his Subjects in what Station soever, (i. e. whether they be Civil or Ecclesiastical Powers) are equally without Authority, to judge, censure, or punish, the Servants of another Master, in Matters relating purely to Conscience or SALVATION.*

My Inference from the same Principle is, That the Church hath no Temporal Power: And with respect to the Civil Magistrate, I most expressly guard against the Use his Lordship has made of his Text, in these Words; *But it ought to be remembered, that the Arguments drawn from the Nature of Religion, and of CHRIST'S SPIRITUAL KINGDOM, against the use of temporal Punishments, are conclusive ONLY as to the Ministers of that Kingdom; and cannot extend to the CIVIL MAGISTRATE,* 5th of November Sermon, P. 9.

The Agreement you see draws on apace.

But if this, all this, is not sufficient to shew the true View of my Sermon, I have one Evidence more to produce, and he no willing one, I assure you, even the Letter-Writer himself—— His Evidence stands thus : 'Tis very plain to him, that his Lordship and I agree : And at *P. 18.* he says ; His Lordship asserts, *That to apply Force, &c. in order to make Men Profess this or that Opinion (for this is evidently his Meaning) is to act, &c.* Now Sir, if his Lordship and I agree ; if his Lordship, in your Opinion, spoke of Rewards and Punishments only as they are applied *in order to make Men profess this or that Opinion* : I humbly hope, that I may have leave to say, that even in your Judgment, I speak of Temporal Power *only* as 'tis applied *in order to make Men profess this or that Opinion.*

Whether his Lordship means, as the Letter-Writer says he does, has been already examined, and proved that he does not.

Suppose now, that the Passages produced out of his Lordship's Sermon, and out of mine, do agree in Words, yet what is this towards shewing that his Lordship and I are in the same Sentiments, since he speaks of one Thing, and I of another ? Shou'd I say *the King has no Authority*, evidently meaning in *Italy* or *Spain* : Shou'd another say, *The King has no Authority* ; as evidently meaning in *Great-Britain* or *Ireland* : Would the Letter-Writer say, we agreed ; that my Words had the same ill Tendency that the

others had ; that I, as directly impeach'd the King's lawful Supremacy , as the other ? If he would not say it in that Case, why does he say it in this, which is exactly the same. The Bishop says, the *Civil Magistrate* has no Authority to add Temporal Punishments in Matters of Religion : I say, *The Church* has no Authority to add them. His Lordship speaks of the *Laws of Christ as he left them* : I speak of *Differences in Opinions* ; of *Matters of Speculation* ; of *Mistakes and Errors of Conscience*. ~ His Lordship speaks of increasing the Penalties, to make those obey the Law, who are *already Subjects* of Christ ; that is, who are *willingly and sincerely persuaded of the Law* ; I speak of forcing the *Assent* in Matters of Difference : His Lordship is against *negative Discouragements* ; I am against *positive Punishments*. And yet it seems we are both of the same Mind.

I might very well rest the Matter here, and leave the World to judge between us. But to clear the Matter once for all (which I never intend to meddle with more) I will examine the particular Passages produced by the Letter-Writer.

The first Passage produced out of my Sermon, is p. 8.

'Tis just Reasoning, I think, to infer from the spiritual Nature of Christ's Kingdom, and the spiritual Power of HIS MINISTERS on Earth, that temporal Punishments are not proper to enforce the Laws and Edicts of Christ's Kingdom ; for since the Kingdom is not of this World, the Powers belonging

longing to THIS Kingdom cannot be of this World.

This Passage stands under the first Head; which was to shew, That the Church as such, is not entitled to the Exercise of Temporal Powers; and the very Passage it self speaks as much, concluding, that the *Powers belonging to this Kingdom (i. e. the Powers of the Church) cannot be of this World.*

The next is, under the same Head too, and in the same Page.

If the Authority be of this World, it must be supported by the Power of this World. To this I must add the Passage quoted in the Letter, p. 17. and mark'd Number VII; for though set at such a Distance in the Letter, 'tis Part of the same Paragraph, and relates to the same Argument. The Words are ;

And consequently, *Those who are for throwing all Spiritual Power out of the Church, and introducing into the Room of it a Power derived from the Civil Magistrate, must, to exempt the Consciences of Men from a Spiritual Jurisdiction, submit them to a Temporal, and leave them to truckle to the Power of the Sword ; which is in its Consequence, whatever it may be in its Principle, downright Popery.* The Words in the Roman Character are, omitted by the Letter-Writer.

To what Purpose these Passages are quoted, I cannot imagine: They have no Reference to the Question in Debate, but are Part of an Argument brought to assert the Spiritual Jurisdiction of the Church. There are some, we know, who to de-

destroy the Spiritual Authority of the Church, deny that the Church is derived from the Institutions of Christ, or his Apostles; and assert it to be a mere Creature of the State. And their *Conclusion* is right; for if the Church be derived from a Temporal Power, she can claim from that no Spiritual Jurisdiction: But then these Men are equally, (if not more) zealous against the Temporal Power of the Church, as against the Spiritual. To them therefore I argue; If the Church be derived from the State, it must derive a Power from the State for its Support; as all Civil Societies and Incorporations have, in virtue of their Incorporation, some Civil Power for their own Preservation: Therefore, I say, in the first Passage, *If the Authority be of this World, it must be supported by the Power of this World*; that is, if the Church derives all her Authority from the State, she must have a State (Temporal) Power to support that Authority. Upon which I infer, in the 2d Passage: Consequently *THOSE, who are for throwing all Spiritual Power out of the Church, and introducing into the room of it, a Power DERIVED from the CIVIL MAGISTRATE, must, to exempt the Consciences of Men from a Spiritual Jurisdiction, (which is their Aim) submit them to a Temporal: Which is in its Consequences — downright Popery.* That is, to give the Church, as such, a Temporal Power; which is the Consequence of deriving her Authority from the State; *is downright Popery.* And now what is this to the Purpose? Is here one
Word

Word about the Magistrate's Power, in Matters of Religion ; or any thing parallel to what the Bishop says, except the mere Sound of Words ? But let us go on. .

The next Passage is Page 12. of the Letter, and 8 of the Sermon.

The Passage stands thus in the Letter.

MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.

This may serve to shew the Meaning and Extent of our Saviour's Argument, and how contrary it is to the Genius and Spirit of the Christian Religion, to FOUND its Faith in Temporal Punishments. The Powers which ARE DERIVED to the CHURCH from Christ the Head, are purely Spiritual ; the Punishments she inflicts are of the same Nature, and the Effect of them is generally suspended, till the Offender comes to another World.

This Passage likewise stands under the first Head in the Sermon, which was to shew, That the Church has no Temporal Powers, as such : And the Passage speaks only of *the Powers derived to the Church from Christ the Head.* And what has this to do in a Debate about the Magistrate ? Because the Church has no Temporal Power, will it follow that the Magistrate has none ? If not, why was this Place produced at all ?

But here the Letter-Writer has shewed his Art and his Sincerity at once : The Bishop deduces all his Doctrine, with respect to the No Authority of the Church and Magistrate, from this single Sentence, *My Kingdom is not of this World.* The
Letter-

Letter-Writer thought it to his Purpose, that I should do so too : And therefore he has added at the beginning of this Passage taken from my Sermon, *My Kingdom is not of this World*. Whereas I begin a new distinct Paragraph with these Words, (and refer back, not to a single Text, but to all I had said on the Subject,) *This may serve to shew, &c.* The Paragraph before does not end, with those Words, *My Kingdom is not of this World*, but with these, *Now is my Kingdom not from hence* : And they stand joined to what goes before, and not introducing what follows in the Passage quoted.

At this rate, my Friend may make me agree with whom he pleases : If he meant me an Honour, I have Reason to excuse his Zeal, but I desire for the future, that he wou'd serve me in an honest Way.

The next Passage is page 12. Letter, and 12 Sermon. *The Truth of the matter lies in a very narrow Compass : The Church has no Right to impose Penal Laws upon any Account : In Matters purely of a Religious Nature, the State has no Right neither.*

I overlook the false Pointing of this Passage, in the Letter ; it does me no other Injury, than making Nonsense of my Words ; and that I can forgive. The Stress of the Quotation lies in the last Words ; *In matters purely of a Religious Nature, the State has no Right neither.*

I have already told the Reader, what I mean, by Matters purely of a Religious Nature, in this

Debate: That I distinguish between Opinions in Religious Matters, considered only as they affect the Consciences of Men; and as they come to shew themselves in Practices of ill Consequence to publick Peace. In the former Case, I call them Matters *purely of a Religious Nature*, and have expressly distinguished them in this Sermon, from *pure, essential Religion*. And if my Friend had looked to the End of the Passage; the Beginning of which he here produces, he would have seen my Meaning — For of these Matters of *purely a Religious Nature*, I say; *of such Matters perhaps there may be great scarcity in the World; for the Passions of Men work themselves into their Religious Concerns; and the Controversy grows insensibly into a Struggle for Power and Superiority; and it becomes him (the Magistrate) to stir and to drive Conscience out of the State to its proper Seat, the Heart of Man; whither his Power neither can nor ought to follow it.* Now the Matters of *purely a Religious Nature*, in the Beginning of the Passage, *in which the State has no Right*, must be the same with those in the End of it, which the Magistrates Power, *neither can nor ought to follow*; and these are declared to be, Points of Conscience, whilst they are *in their proper Seat, the Heart of Man*.

'Tis true indeed, that the Expressions, (*Matters of purely a Religious Nature, and pure Religion,*) are too near a-kin in Sound, whilst they stand for such different Ideas. But alas ! I am not arrived to an Authority, that will bear me out in discarding old Words, and coining new ones ; or raising new Images to represent old Notions ; and therefore must be content to speak as the World speaks, and shift as well as I can with the Difficulties of my Mother Tongue. 'Tis observable, however, that in the Use the Letter-Writer makes of this Passage, he has thought fit to leave out the Word *purely*, page 14 Letter. This being the first good Office he has done me, I ought to thank him for it ; for considering the Use that has been made of this, and Words of the like Import, I am very willing to part with my Share of them. Tho' the Letter-Writer, for a Reason which he and I know, ought to have shewn more Tenderneſs to such a *significant* Word.

The next Passage is p. 15 Letter, p. 6 Sermon.

The Honour of God is best consulted by complying with the gracious Designs of his Providence ; and the Honour of Religion best secured, by promoting the Ends of it. And since our Saviour has told us, that the Design of his coming into the World, and the End of the Religion he taught, was not to destroy, but to save Men's Lives ; there can be no greater

greater Indignity offered to God ; no greater Contempt shewn of Christ, or Blemish cast upon Religion ; than to make Religion, which was design'd to save Men, the Means and Instrument of destroying them. The Argument reaches to all Methods of propagating Religion, which are hurtful or injurious to Men, as well as merely to the destroying them by the Fire and Sword ; for the Son of Man, no more came to injure and abuse Men, than he did to destroy them : And the Argument is equally strong against injuring or abusing our Fellow-Creatures in order to PROPAGATE the Faith, as it is against destroying them.

This Passage is at the very Beginning of the first Head of Discourse, intended to exclude the Church, as such, from Temporal Power ; I put the Plea for Temporal Power in the Church, in the same manner that the Church of Rome puts it ; — The whole Weight of the Argument lies upon the Honour of God and Religion ; from which Topick the Doctrine of extirpating Hereticks fetches its main Support. I answer this Plea in the Words above : Extirpating Hereticks by Church Power was the Case in view, which I shew to be inconsistent with the Honour of God and Religion ; and say expressly, that this Argument holds with respect to all Methods of propagating Religion, that are hurtful and injurious. And what then ? Propagating

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gating Religion is one Thing ; and punishing Men for Actions against the plain Laws of Christ, to which they own themselves subject, is another. 'Tis one Thing to say, that 'tis opposite to the Maxims of Christ, to encourage by Temporal Rewards, Religion as 'tis Virtue and Charity ; which his Lordship affirms in the Passage set opposite to this in the Letter : And another to say, as I do, That the Faith is not to be propagated by hurting or abusing Men.

In order to remove an Objection against what I here say of injuring and abusing Men ; I state it my self, in the next Words after the Passage.

'Tis true, that all Punishments do not come under the Notion of Injuries or Abuses, since many are calculated for the Benefit of Offenders, &c.

I answer this by saying, that, *However good a Reason this may be for exercising Temporal Punishments in the Cause of Religion, it can signify nothing in the PRESENT CASE ; unless the CHURCH be VESTED with a Power of dispensing Temporal Punishments ; for this Reason cannot CREATE a Power where it is not.*

What then was the *present Case*, in which I was concern'd ? Have I not plainly express'd it to be, *Whether the Church were vested with Temporal Power ?* And what is this to the Letter-Writer's Point ? I am

I am speaking, of the Power of the Church.

His Lordship, of the Power of the Civil Magistrate.

And my good Friend says, we both speak of the same Thing.

The next Passage, *p. 16. Lett. p. 7. Serm.* is Part of this very Argument, and follows the Words last quoted : It is guarded before and behind against all Mistakes, but wilful ones. After having said,

This Reason cannot create a Power (in the Church) where it is not ; it can only direct the Exercise of it, (i. e. in the Magistrate's Hand) where it is : I add the Passage quoted by the Letter. And therefore, to those who urge the Conveniency of Temporal Punishments in Matters of Religion, we answer with our Blessed Saviour, Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this World, nor is it to be Erected or Supported by Worldly Power. Here the Letter ends. I go on : He has not intrenched upon the Civil Magistrates Authority, or granted any Part of THEIR Commission to HIS DISCIPLES.

I can make this Passage no plainer : If my Friend cannot see that I speak here of Church Power, and not of Civil Power, I have no Help for him.

The Passage, p. 17. *Letter*, has been considered already.

The Five next, and only remaining Passages made use of by the Letter-Writer, p. 21, and 12, 13, 14, Pages of the Sermon, are,

1. *Thus much is certain, the Magistrate has no Right to punish Men for the Mistakes in their Judgment, or Errors of their Conscience.*

2. *They lay it down for a Maxim, that the Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience ; which is very true.*

3. *The Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience ; and therefore on ONE HAND, he has no Right to bring Conscience to his Bar, to punish the Errors or Mistakes of it, or to censure even the Actions which proceed from it, unless they affect the Publick Good.*

4. *The Ministers of Christ are not of this World ; and therefore they have no Right to extend their Master's Kingdom, by the Exercise of Worldly or Temporal Power. The Civil Magistrate is of this World, and the Affairs of it are his proper Care.*

5. *The Magistrate might well say——Conscience I have nothing to do with.*

These Passages all relate to one and the same Argument ; and the Letter-Writer has
pick'd

pick'd them up just as he thought most convenient to his present Purpose, well knowing that the Subject of the Argument was nothing to his Purpose. The Argument is to assert the Magistrate's Right to punish the evil Actions of Men, notwithstanding that such Actions may be the Effect of a misguided Conscience: And I have shewn, that this Right is consistent with all just Claims that can be made in behalf of Conscience. In this Case, the Conscience is supposed erroneous, and to lead to evil Practices; and therefore I think here is nothing that can be parallel'd with the Bishop's Cases, of *the Worship of God in Spirit and Truth*, or *Religion, considered as Virtue and Charity*. The great Fault that I find with the Plea for Liberty of Conscience, as 'tis commonly used, is, That Men do not really plead for Liberty of Conscience, but for a Liberty of Action; that is, a Liberty to do whatever they shall think fit to say their Conscience persuades them to. The Principle they go upon is this, *The Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience*. I allow them their Principle, and shew them that it will not serve their Purpose, or exclude the Magistrate from punishing the ill Actions of Men, however they may plead Conscience. And now I will produce the entire Argument, as it stands in the Sermon, and distinguish the Passages produc'd by the Letter-Writer in
a dif-

ferent Character ; and so leave it to the Readers Judgment.

In this Question of the Magistrate's Right, it matters not what a Man's Opinions are, or how well or how ill a Man's Conscience is informed : For thus much is certain, that the Magistrate has no Right to punish Men for the Mistakes in their Judgment, or the Errors of their Consciences. On the other Side, when the Magistrate calls a Man to an Account for his Actions, I cannot see that it is so much as his Duty to enquire, whether the Man took what he did to be a Part of his Religion, or whether he follow'd the Dictates of his Conscience, or no : What can the Civil Magistrate have to do in such Questions ; or how can he arrive at any Evidence concerning the Truth of these Matters ? The Nature of the Action lies properly before him, consider'd in it self, and in its Consequences ; and if it tend to Mischief, to breed Disturbance in the State, he has a Right to punish it, without considering whether it be a Religious Action or no.

There would need no disputing in this Case, if Men would attend to the just Consequences of their own Principles : They lay it down for a Maxim, That the Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience ; which is very true : But then they infer, That the Magistrate cannot punish Men for acting according to their
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Conscience ; which is to say, That his Authority is suspended by the Plea of Conscience : And if so, the Magistrate, I think, will have more than enough to do with it ; since the People's Conscience will bind his Power in the Exercise of the Sword, and he must of Necessity in the Administration of Justice enter into the Examination of Conscience ; for since that is to be his Rule, he ought to know and to consider it.

But if you will attend to the Natural and Just Consequences of the Principle, the Truth will stand in a clear Light : The Magistrate has nothing to do with Conscience : And therefore on one Hand he has no Right to bring Conscience to his Bar, to punish the Errors or Mistakes of it ; or to censure even the Actions which proceed from it, unless they affect, that which is his immediate Care, the Publick Good , or the private Peace and Property of his Subjects : And on the other Hand, no one else can bring Conscience before him, or by the Pleas of it supersede his Authority in any Case proper for his Cognizance. For the Magistrate might well say, The Action is such as I am concerned to enquire into ; Conscience I have nothing to do with, it does not lye before me, and therefore I shall not attend to its Pretences. Nor indeed is it possible that he should, since 'tis in every Man's Power in all Cases to plead Conscience ; which is never

more easily pretended to, than by those who have none. A Man under a Criminal Accusation might as well refer himself to what was done in the Mogul's Countrey, as to what pass'd at that Time in his own unsearchable Heart; and the Magistrate might, with much more Reason, admit the Evidence in one Case, than in the other, where there is no Possibility of knowing the Truth.

The Passage mark'd Numb. 4. is only a Recapitulation of this Argument, and is to the same Purpose. The Letter-Writer has stopt short in the Middle of a Sentence: But that is a small Matter among Friends: Read then, the last Sentence of the Passage thus; *The Civil Magistrate is of this World, and the Affairs of it are his proper Care, from which he ought not to be excluded by any Pretences or Pleas of Religion.*

The Laws of Christ as he left them; the Essence of God's Worship; Religion as it is Virtue and Charity; are no Pretences, or Pleas of Religion: Of the former the Bishop speaks throughout his Sermon: Of the latter I speak, and let the World judge how we agree.

I have now gone thro' the Letter, and all in it, that relates to my Sermon. The only Satisfaction I can make the World for troubling them so long in so trivial a Matter, is to promise, that I will never do so again.. I
have

have stated his Lordship's Sense and my own; if the Letter-Writer does not like it, he is at Liberty to write on as he thinks fit. I am not at such a Loss to employ my Time, as to be willing to attend upon every Call of this Nature. These small Attacks are but the Excrescencies of a Controversy, and not worth regarding: I say not this, in order to decline any Service that I owe, and can perform, to the Church; or the Convocation which now cannot speak for it self. When his Lordship publishes his Answer, I shall be neither afraid nor ashamed to own the Cause; or to take a share in the common Defense of the Representation of the Committee, in which I concurred.

And I cannot but wonder to see with how much Anger the Committee is treated, for seeing what all the World sees as well as they: *Friends and Foes* agree in his Lordship's Meaning: Look into the *Layman's Letter of Thanks*, the *Anatomy of the Convocation*, &c.

These are his Lordship's Admirers, and praise his Doings; and they praise him for doing the very Thing, which the Convocation blames in him: Both agree in their Sense, tho' not in their Resentments, of his Lordship's Doctrine.

The two Authors mentioned, both set out with the same happy Thought, declaring,

claring, that it was no Surprize to them that the Lower-House of Convocation resented the Bishop's Doctrine, *because it has touched them in the tender Part* : His Lordship now says, that he touched them not in any Part, but published *only* a Doctrine against *Popery*, which *they all* agree in : How will his Lordship's Friends like this ? Will they not think themselves deserted ? Or how can his Lordship like *their* Treatment of him, when he complains so heavily of others ? Why have not they been rebuked for mistaking and misrepresenting his Lordship's Opinion ? Or why has the Committee ? Was the Convocation only bound to be blind ? Was it commendable in those who liked the Doctrine and the Tendency, to understand his Lordship's Meaning ; and publickly to thank him for daring to appear against the Current of Corrupt Leaders ; who are every Day running U S back again into the worst part of POPERY. (2d Letter of Thanks, page 2.) And was it so outrageous an Injury for those to see it, who cannot, if they will maintain the Trust reposed in them, be silent under such an Attack upon the Rights of the Christian Church, and the Christian Magistrate ? For my own Part, I heartily wish to have these Wounds closed up again ; I should rejoice to see his Lordship clear'd of the Charge he is under, for the Sake of the Church of which he is a
Bishop,

to the Reverend Dr. Sherlock. 53

Bishop, and for his own Sake: And I wish him nothing worse, than that he may take the Methods proper to these Ends.

Those he must chuse himself: But should he resolve to insist on the Justification of his Sermon; he will find, (if I have any Judgment) that he has a Matter of another Nature upon his Hands, than ever yet he was engaged in.

And here I would beg leave, to make use of this Opportunity, of observing what sort of Answer his Lordship is preparing to the Representation, according to his own Account of it, in his Reply to Dr. Snape (p. 33, 34.) His Lordship's Account is —

I have taught Men (and I here declare I will go on to teach them) to receive no Commands in Matters relating to their Eternal Salvation from any Superiors, whether Spiritual or Temporal, absolutely and implicitly, upon the Ground of mere Authority, without examining them by the Laws of Christ, and finding them agreeable to those Laws: —

All this, which I have been now saying, will appear still more clearly, if possible, in the Answer, which I am preparing, to the Representation of the Committee of the Lower-house of Convocation.

For whose use this Answer is preparing, profess I cannot imagine, or what Purpose is to serve, unless to blind the Eyes of the
World,

World, and to lead them off from the true Point, to one which his Lordship can better deal with. His Lordship would be glad to have the *World about him think*, that the whole Controversy is about Authority to interpret, and impose Laws, *absolutely, unlimitedly, unconditionally, &c.* But here his Lordship fights without an Adversary: And he might as well answer the Representation, by proving there is no Philosopher's Stone, as by proving there is no absolute unlimited Authority, to *interpret or make* Laws for Christians. The Representation has but once mentioned the *interpreting the Laws of Christ*, and then only with respect to the Apostles of Christ, who upon his Lordship's Principles, are equally, with others, excluded this Authority of Interpretation.

The Charge in the Representation is, That his Lordship's Doctrines tend to *subvert all Government and Discipline in the Church of Christ.*

Can there be no Government, where there is no *absolute* Authority to *interpret* Laws? Can there be no Discipline, without unlimited, unconditional Submission to the Dictate of mere Authority? If there cannot, there is an end of all Government in the World for such *absolute, unlimited, such mere* Authority, there is none, either Civil or Ecclesiastical. But if these Things do not necessa-
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rily go together ; if Government and Discipline may be carried on without such *mere* Authority ; then the Committee might charge his Lordship with subverting Government and Discipline in the Church, without claiming to themselves such *mere* Authority, or blaming him for writing against it : And if so, his Lordship may write a *Folio* against Absolute Authority, and yet the Case will stand as it does : It will still remain a Question, after all he can say upon that Subject, Whether his Doctrines tend or no to *subvert the Government and Discipline of the Church* ? To make this plain, I will put a Case, it shall be that of the incestuous *Corinthian* : His Crime is known ; and every one may see in Holy Writ, what the Apostle thought proper Discipline in his Case. Suppose then, the very same Case should happen in any Christian Church now. I ask ; Is there an Authority in the Church to excommunicate such a Person, *i. e.* to exclude him from the Christian Assembly, and to deny him the use of the Sacraments ? If you say, No ; you do what the Committee charges on his Lordship, subvert the Discipline of the Church : If you say, Yes ; you allow the Discipline : But then, (according as his Lordship intends to answer the Representation) you will be told, That you claim an *absolute, unconditional, unlimited*, and *mere* Authority

ty to *make* and *interpret* Laws for Christians : And either this is a just Charge ; or his Lordship's Answer will not be a just Answer to the Representation.

The Representation has produced out of his Lordship's Sermon, some Passages, where the Doctrines, which are conceived to subvert the Government of the Church, and those relating to *absolute* Authority, are mixed together : The Committee fix their Charge on the Former ; his Lordship will answer to the Latter : And no doubt but the *World about us* will improve by the Controversy.

To these Passages, the Committee added (to prevent Mistakes) short Observations of their own, which were intended to point to the Thing they found Fault with : After the first Passage cited, they say, *It seems to deny all Authority to the Church ; and under Pretence of exalting the Kingdom of Christ, to leave it without any visible Human Authority to judge, censure, or punish Offenders, in the Affairs of Conscience or Salvation.*

Is here any Thing about *mere* Authority ; any Claim to a Right of *absolute* Interpretation ? No : But his Lordship affirms, *That Christ is the sole Judge of the BEHAVIOUR of his Subjects, in the Affairs of Conscience and Eternal Salvation ; i. e.* as he explains himself, p. 15. Sermon, — *In all Points relating to the Favour or Displeasure of*
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Almighty God. We say, that Christ is not *sole* Judge of the *Behaviour*, &c. for the Church has a Right to judge of the *Behaviour* of Men with respect to the Laws of Christ, which are Points most certainly *relating to the Favour or Displeasure of Almighty God.* *Behaviour* takes in the external Actions of Men with regard to the Law they are under: And 'tis one Thing to judge the BEHAVIOUR of Men by a plain Law, acknowledg'd and receiv'd by the Offender himself; and 'tis another Thing to pretend to a Power to interpret *absolutely, unlimitedly*, &c. the doubtful or obscure Laws.

With respect to this Right of Judging, his Lordship has added no Limitation: *Absolutely*, and *Properly*, stand in the same Period, but referr'd to other Matters. His Lordship uses the Word *absolutely*, when applied to Interpreters; and when applied to Judges, in a very different Sense: He says of Interpreters, There are none who can interpret *absolutely*; but of Judges he says, There are *absolutely* none to judge. You shall have his own Words, *p. 16.* — *Let him but ask himself, Whether the Church of Christ be the Kingdom of Christ, or not? And if it be, Whether this Notion of it doth not ABSOLUTELY EXCLUDE ALL OTHER Legislators and JUDGES, in Matters relating to Conscience, and the Favour of God?* His Lordship has

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such

such Plenty of *Absolutely's* and *Properly's*, that he'll excuse me, I know, if I claim this (*Absolutely*) for the Use of the Committee.

I don't intend to enter further into this Matter, than is necessary to shew, That the Argument his Lordship is preparing against *Absolute Authority*, will not come up to the Point of the Representation; and therefore the many Passages in his Sermon to the same Purpose, shall rest till a fitter Opportunity.

But his Lordship tells us, in his Answer to Dr. *Snape*, p. 37, 38. That all he has taught, amounts only to a Denial of Absolute Authority. I will give the Proposition he has taught, in his own Words; and 'tis drawn up as circumspectly and securely, as if 'twere a Conveyance of Lands. *Christ is sole Law-giver and Judge in Matters of Eternal Salvation; and hath delegated NO ABSOLUTE, i. e. — Unlimited Authority to Men, to which Christians are absolutely, i. e. — Unlimitedly, Unconditionally, without Examination, to submit. — THIS IS ALL I HAVE TAUGHT.* Alas! why has all this Flame been raised about nothing? About a Doctrine which is not disputed? Was it for THIS, and this ONLY, that his Lordship's Sermon was introduced with so solid an Observation upon the Abuse of Words; which have *insensibly varied, by passing thro' many Mouths, and by being taken*
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and given by Multitudes, in common Discourse, till they come to stand for a Complication of Notions, as distant from the Original Intention of them, nay, as contradictory to it, as Darkness is to Light? Was it for THIS, that his Audience was awakened with his proclaiming, his OPEN and UNDISGUISED Zeal against an Evil, invading the most sacred and important Subjects, TOUCHING the very Vitals of all that is good, and just going to take from Mens Eyes the Boundaries of Right and Wrong? Was it for THIS, that Four Instances were given of such Abuse of Words, to prepare the way for the FIFTH, the grand Abuse of all; even of the Word Church; which his Lordship tells us, has been so diversified by the various Alterations it hath undergone, that 'tis almost impossible so much as to number up the many inconsistent Images, that have come by daily Additions to be united together in it; and therefore he lays Church aside, and sets up a new Image, which hath not been so much used, nor consequently so much defaced? Was all this only in order to inform us of what every body knew and believed before? Had his Lordship no other View, methinks the Word Church might have served the Purpose then, as well as it had done Two Hundred Years before; in all which time the Word had been innocently used, without claiming Absolute Power. And indeed (as far as I can

see) the Notion of Church is further removed from Absolute Authority, than the Notion of Kingdom. *Kingdom*, in the very Sound of it, carries more Power than Church: And I believe his Lordship is the first, who ever thought of setting up a *Kingdom*, merely for the sake of pulling down Authority. Besides, his Lordship owns that no such Notion, as that of absolute Authority, was joined to the Word *Church*, by any of those for whose Use the Sermon can be supposed, to be preach'd or printed: *His Brethren*, the Bishops, he believes,

P. 42. Anf.
to *Shape*.

disclaim, and disdain it. So do, A L L, even every Man of the Church of England; Every Man of those themselves who have treated me in the same Unhandsome Manner upon this Account.

p. 41. Ibid.

And his Lordship professes seriously, That he never knew, nor heard of any Church upon Earth, except the Church of Rome in its latter corrupted State, which ever dared to claim such an absolute Authority.

And was *this* Notion, which every Man of the Church of England, as well Clergy as Laity, rejects; was *this* the Evil to be opposed with an open and undisguised Zeal? Was this *Evil*, which it seems no body is infected with, the very Thing which touched the

the Vitals of all that is Good, and was just going to take from Mens Eyes the Boundaries of Right and Wrong?

No, no; this was not the Secret: His Lordship has been too long a Writer to make so great an *Apparatus* introductive of *Nothing*: But be it as it will: If his Lordship can prove, That his Doctrines do not tend to subvert the Government and Discipline of the Church; That 'tis consistent with his Opinion, that the Church may Censure Men for their *Behaviour*, with respect to the Laws of Christ; notwithstanding he has affirmed, That Christ *is the sole Judge of their Behaviour*, in matters of Salvation. That Spiritual Governors may Judge, Censure, and Punish Offenders in Matters of Religion; notwithstanding he has affirmed (p. 16.) *That no one of Christ's Subjects in what Station soever they may be, —bath Authority — to Judge, Censure, or Punish the Servants of another Master* (i.e. Christians) *in Matters relating purely to Conscience or Salvation.* (And to Salvation, the plainest, the Moral Laws of the Gospel do relate :) If in these Points his Lordship can make room for a Judge on Earth; after declaring, that, in these Points, *Christ must be Judge alone, or not at all*, p. 24. If he can exhort Men to pay any Regard to *their Spiritual Teachers and Pastors*; after
 declaring,

declaring, that the *MORE CLOSE AND IMMEDIATE* their Regard is to Christ, the more certainly, and the more evidently true it is, that they are of his Kingdom : If he can teach Men to Reverence those who are over them in the Lord ; after having exhorted them, to shew themselves Subjects to Christ in the Affair — of Salvation, without Fear of *MAN'S JUDGMENT* : If his Lordship, I say, can shew these Things to be consistent ; and that his Doctrines do not tend to set Men loose from all Church Discipline ; he may then Answer the *Representation* ; and I shall be ready among the foremost to own my Ignorance and Weakness ; and to beg his Lordship's Pardon.

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 30. l. 12. for *chused* read *chosen*. P. 31. l. 24. for *against* read *with* ; and l. 25. for *with* read *in*.

*Sermons by the Reverend Dr. SHERLOCK,
Dean of Chichester.*

1. **A** Sermon Preach'd before the Queen
at *St. James*, *Jan. 31. 1703-4.*
2. A Sermon Preach'd before the Sons of
the Clergy at *St. Paul's*, *Dec. 5. 1710.*
2. A Sermon Preach'd before the Right
Honourable the Lord-Mayor, &c. at *St.
Paul's*, *Nov. 5. 1712.*
4. A Sermon Preach'd before the Honour-
able House of Commons, at *St. Margaret's
Westminster*, *March 8. 1714.*
5. A Sermon Preach'd at the *Temple-
Church*, *Nov. 20, 1715.*
6. A Sermon Preach'd before the Society
for the Propagation of the Gospel in
Foreign Parts, at *St. Mary-le-Bow*, *Feb. 17.
1715.*
7. A Sermon Preach'd before the Honour-
able House of Commons, at *St. Margaret's
Westminster*, *June 7. 1716.*
8. A Sermon Preach'd before the Right
Honourable the Lord-Mayor, &c. at the
Parish-Church of *St. Bridget*, on *Tuesday in
Easter-Week*, *April 23. 1717.*

All Sold by John Pemberton.



